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with this intricate and highly developed branch of Japanese art; for it must be seen to be appreciated.

We can thus see in this exhibition an artistic expression of Japanese ideals. The individual artist makes a common appeal to the race for the reason that, in a sense, he is the interpreter of its own thought. His message now goes beyond the boundaries of the Island Empire and transmits to the people of a western world, undreamed of at the time, something of the spirit which gave inspiration to brush and chisel in an age that is all too quickly fading into the shadows of the past.

ROBERT HAMILTON RUCKER.

A FIFTEENTH-CENTURY MADONNA

ALBERT VAN OUWATER, to whom a lately acquired Madonna and Child¹ is attributed by distinguished authorities,² is a shadowy figure in the history of art. His name comes down to us in Van Mander's *Book of the Painters*, where he is spoken of with respect as one clever at painting heads, hands, draperies, and landscape. The author was familiar with one of the artist's paintings—an altarpiece (which has since disappeared) in the great church in Haarlem. This was called the Roman altarpiece because it had been erected by pilgrims on their return from Rome. He also mentions another work by van Ouwater, the *Raising of Lazarus*, which he knew by means of a copy in monochrome, the original having been looted by the Spaniards at the siege of Haarlem in 1573 and carried away into Spain. "This," says Van Mander, "is all that time has preserved for us of this old master to save his name from oblivion."

It was in 1604 that these words were written. The original of the *Raising of Lazarus* came to light in recent years, in the possession of a Genoese family, and has since found its way into the Kaiser Fried-

rich Museum in Berlin. On the basis of its similarity to this one known work by him, our Madonna is ascribed to the same artist. The resemblance in certain forms is remarkable. Sir Martin Conway points out that the features of the Virgin are practically a reproduction of those of the Christ in the Berlin example. Our panel, however, with its rich crimsons and golden browns is more colorful than the other, which is indeed somewhat cold and dry in effect.

Whether it be ultimately decided that it is by van Ouwater or not, our Madonna and Child is undoubtedly a very attractive example of the early Dutch school in an almost faultless state of preservation. Its date should be placed somewhere in the last quarter of the fifteenth century. The mediaeval art of Flanders was well on its road to modernism when painting in Holland began. Dirk Bouts, the most important fifteenth-century Dutch painter, passed his career in Flanders. Our painting shows some of the traits of this master, the most prominent of which is a matter-of-fact determination to draw types from contemporary life rather than from foreign pictures or from some preconceived ideal of beauty or expression. The Christ child in our picture is a striking example of this characteristic. The square-headed, stiff-limbed little figure bears all the marks of being an accurate portrait of a Dutch baby. The Madonna, though her expression is more idealized, is also distinctly Netherlandish. The painting of her rich costume is derived from the work of the Van Eycks or their pupils. The landscape³ is founded on the landscapes that appear in the backgrounds of Italian pictures. It is a Swiss view, one would say, of a mountain lake, a high cliff, and at its base a castle reached by a wooden causeway. Although various influences appear in the work, the artist's personality is clearly expressed. He is revealed in it as a skilful and painstaking artist of an earnest and straightforward type of mind.

B. B.

¹ Panel; H. 15 $\frac{5}{8}$, W. 12 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. In Gallery 34.

² Sir Martin Conway and Dr. Tancred Borenius. See an article by the former in the *Burlington Magazine*, March, 1922.

³ "The oldest painters," says Van Mander, "are of the opinion that the correct manner of treating landscape was first adopted in Haarlem."

THE CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS AT THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM

The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London have had a pleasant intercourse for a number of years in reference to their educational work and problems. Miss E. M. Spiller, Honorable Secretary of the Art

before 11 o'clock in the morning. Boys and girls troop in with a business-like air; they greet one another as old friends and reminders pass round that clean hands and faces are desirable. Soon a few well-recognized grown-up friends arrive and hearty handshaking and greetings ensue. "Good morning, George, you really have grown this time, how are the others?" "Thank you, miss, Jessie and Jimmy are coming



MADONNA AND CHILD
BY ALBERT VAN OUWATER

Teachers' Guild, has more than once entertained members of the Museum staff with a recital of the profitable way in which the Christmas holidays are spent by some children in London. At our request she has written such an account for this BULLETIN.

WHEN the Christmas holidays begin there is a good deal of bustle in the Entrance Hall of the Museum some minutes

along presently, but I don't think Ernie will be here this morning." "Well, any prizes this year?" "Not me, miss, but Ernie and Jimmy have both got prizes." Six-year-old Jimmy arrives, beaming of countenance.—"Hello, Jimmy, I've just heard that you won a prize at school; what was it for?" "Punckchality and reg'lar 'tendence, miss." "That's right; I expect you've been a good boy too, only I think your mother ought to have the prize if she